



NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT
FOR THE
ARTS

2015
NATIONAL
HERITAGE
FELLOWSHIPS



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*Cambodian ceramic piece by
Yary Livan, photo by Maggie
Holtzberg, Massachusetts Cultural
Council*



Lucy Mingo "Blocks and
Strips work-clothes, 1959" quilt,
photo courtesy of Souls Grown
Deep Foundation, Steve Pitkin/
Pitkin Studio

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Message from the Chairman

Photo by Straus Peyton Studios



As the National Endowment for the Arts celebrates its 50th year, I applaud our newest NEA National Heritage Fellows for their contributions to American culture. The artists we honor as part of our Heritage Fellowship awards are testament to the diversity, ingenuity, and creativity that characterize this nation, and we are so grateful for the gifts they have brought to all our lives.

Each of them has dedicated their lives to enriching our culture with diverse art forms and sharing their knowledge to help build connections with future generations. Cambodian ceramicist Yary Livan is an example of this; he immigrated to the United States in 2001 and is one of perhaps only three Cambodian ceramists to survive Khmer Rouge's brutal regime—in fact, his knowledge of how to build a kiln saved his life during that genocide. When he came to Lowell, Massachusetts, he soon began giving back to his community as a teacher. With the support of his community, he built a new wood-fired kiln in Lowell National Historical Park, where he not only has the proper tool to create his own masterpieces, but can also enrich the area through public programs and by training other artists in this craft.

Though diverse in practice, these artists all share a common bond in their commitment to their artistic traditions. Through their efforts, they preserve, ensuring these unique art forms are documented, expanded, and passed down for the future. Their strong artistic and cultural connection to their communities is something that the National Endowment for the Arts has supported continually throughout its 50-year history.

Thank you for joining us in this annual celebration of our nation's master folk and traditional artists. Whether shared through song or demonstrated through the careful placement of fabric in a quilt, these art forms are incredibly meaningful to our culture and traditions. I thank each of these incredibly talented artists and advocates for their many contributions and for sharing their art with all of us at this year's events.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jane Chu". The script is fluid and cursive.

Jane Chu
Chairman, National Endowment for the Arts

Message from the Director

The nine people we are celebrating today did not apply for an award—they were nominated by their peers, by their community leaders, and by the recipients of their creative generosity. They were nominated to receive the NEA National Heritage Fellowship—the highest national honor given to folk and traditional artists. Each was selected from a multitude of noteworthy nominations.

The National Heritage Fellows are a collection of remarkable individuals who help to lay the bedrock of our nation's extraordinary cultural foundation. As folk and traditional artists, their work is to be understood as part of a community process whereby the artist—no matter how innovative or visionary—shares significant creative control and creative output with their home community. So while each of these fellows is remarkable in her or his own right for their artistry, they also speak to the best our communities have to offer in ways that go well beyond the arts.

These awards also remind us to pause and consider the deep cultural reservoirs that reside below the surface of everyone around us—that the local night watchman may also be one of the world's great oud players, that a government administrator is a deeply devoted mariachi musician, or that our elementary school teacher may also be the foremost practitioner of ancient Japanese classical dance.

For many in the United States, the stunning beauty of traditional arts belies its origins in struggle. Two of this year's Fellows arrived here as political refugees, targeted by oppressive regimes for their artistic expression. The quilters of Gee's Bend carry on a tradition built from scraps during the trials of American slavery. And both Yiddish language and klezmer music have been constant companions and a source of comfort for the Eastern European Jewish diaspora worldwide.

These living traditions draw us out of ourselves, into the details of the hand-painted eggs at holiday times or the lyrics of a blues song that laughs at life's indignities. And, if we are lucky, the flying of a circus aerialist—like the steeples of the great cathedral—will cause us to stop, look skyward, and dream of life's great possibilities.

Congratulations to the 2015 NEA National Heritage Fellows!



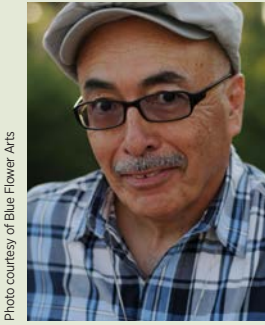
Clifford R. Murphy, PhD
Director, Folk & Traditional Arts, National Endowment for the Arts



Photo by Edwin Remsburg

So I will speak of it

– for the NEA National Heritage Fellows—2015, Library of Congress, Washington, DC



Juan Felipe Herrera

Poet Laureate of the
United States

Let it begin - you say, crimson fibers &
solar epoch rise up at the broken spike of the life-highway
bones of ragged singers the ones you find painted in street shadow life

the ones made of sugar black coffee tin can drink
asleep by the mountain scar — they
still keep songs woven on brown-off-white belts

let grandfather fire Tatewarí tear himself
for the ache sweet waters of mother waves Aramara
teal-glaze ocean-red beads sea speak here

speak here:
long & ancient strings splintered
tiny guitar plywood sanded down
sit here - this corner by Fanta machines teetering
gas pump road to Guadalajara - - -

Who

will
listen? Who who

will step into
the Galaxy Lodge & climb to the Prayer House
hawk feather roof wands Muvieri guard you
there see you there see all things all things
through you the thorn inside
that sickens your watery eyed-soul there inside it falls
who will cure it you how howl
slip slip
close to
the alter black
cinnamon cut dry wood wood hold it up for the First Corn
Tatei Werika Wimari Girl kneel down now
kneel down now kneel down now kneel down now
weep weep but not from above weep from below
from where you were born there yes

the strings wand strings
corn leaf strings hold you up
where Prayer Women rezandera stands behind you
in front of you in the tiny
Grand Lodge pluck pluck
your torn eye that can half- see
you are not from here - are you?

Let the tree sap come down your face the corn nectars
the Blue Deer blood your advisor made of words
most of all -

you are recording this in Calexico.
What is this language made of?
You do not know?

You have journeyed far to this side of you the wise dark women
& the elders stand now. Dressed in white beak woven linens
double-eagle headed designs back strap loom linen
sewn sitting by the jagged rock not the city - the jagged
rock yes. The women threaded are peering at you at us
with needlework. You did not know that - with
needlework not - questions. The

dots have spoken but you do not know
it is important not to know then to know
dots & clay & chakira beads from Tepic city town
officials interpreters doctors priests & bilingual
teachers dressed in khakis & one helicopter.

The sacred corn stands Tatei
stillness in the short Grand Galaxy Lodge —
you sleep there for the night.
Drunkards swing sloppy guitars outside
wobble the wall

in the morning
silver bluish snake crosses your path
you sit next to the elders - Don José & Don Ramón
drummers singers criers seers shamans
of this last mountain edge pueblo shrunken
down by the agreements we make day after day.

You stand
you face

the new Tauyepá solar ring mouth father
a humming bird whispers into your ear
“Tell them it is time!”
Dawn star speaks to you —
“Tell them time is crystal, land is blue,
houses are few, how will you feed the people?
Guns go off — do not injure the Mystery.”

Prayer woman dances
another joins shuffles around her we go back to night again.
You sit record stand tumble turn bow
drink sleep where write nothing there journal
what late you must you say that is all.

It is not culture
it is not culture

rich man's language parole
you have lived in cramped light
in the city mogul polyhedron
when you return where will you go?
That pueblo? It is made of suffering.
It is
constructed
by you
yes
you are changing
you are seeing it you

obsidian bellybutton scarf where
the wound opens to be healed. Take flight
your waist & feet open starry trail now
you say

“This is my home it is where the moon was created
& the sun fell shattered into butterfly First People.”

So I will
speak of it.

Rahim AlHaj

oud player and composer

Albuquerque, NM

“Art is the answer to changing our aspect or concept to our life. It's very important.”

Rahim AlHaj

Hailed as “one of the top oud players in the world” by the *San Francisco Chronicle*, Rahim AlHaj is a performer and composer who combines a traditional Iraqi musical foundation with contemporary styling and influences.

AlHaj was born in Baghdad, Iraq, and began playing the oud—a stringed instrument dating back at least 5,000 years—at age nine. By the age of 13, AlHaj was already known in Baghdad as both a musician and a composer. Out of 2,000 applicants, he won one of five spots to study at the Institute of Music in Baghdad under Munir Bashir, one of the most renowned oud players in the world, and Salim Abdul Kareem, an influential composer and performer. At the same time, he became active in the underground revolutionary movement and composed the movement’s anthem “Why?,” setting to music a poem written by a friend. After being imprisoned twice due to his political activism, AlHaj graduated from the Conservatory in 1990 with a diploma in composition and began touring internationally with Bashir. In 1991, after the first Gulf War, AlHaj was forced to leave Iraq due to his activism against the Saddam Hussein regime and lived in Jordan and Syria before moving to the United States in 2000 as a political refugee. He has lived in Albuquerque, New Mexico, ever since, becoming a U.S. citizen in 2008. AlHaj held jobs as a dishwasher and night watchman, before renting a hall at the University of New Mexico for a solo performance. The positive reaction to his music ignited his career again and he began performing throughout the country and internationally.

AlHaj has released nine CDs, two of which were nominated for Grammy awards—*Ancient Sounds*, a duet recording with Indian classical musician Amjad Ali Khan, and *When the Soul is Settled: Music of Iraq*. He has composed pieces for solo oud, string quartet, and symphony. His compositions combine traditional Iraqi “maqams,” the system of melodic modes used in traditional Arabic music, with contemporary styling and influences, marrying Eastern and Western traditions. AlHaj continues to perform nationally and internationally as a solo artist, in duo configuration, and with his septet Little Earth Orchestra, and has performed with such varied musicians as jazz artist Bill Frisell, the string quartet Kronos Quartet, and the rock band REM. In 2009, he was awarded a United States Artists Fellowship.



Michael Alpert

YIDDISH MUSICIAN AND TRADITION BEARER

New York, NY

“For many years, it seemed that Yiddish culture was something we were striving against all odds to recover, to someday attain. Then one day out on the road in America it suddenly occurred to me that Yiddish culture is not something out there somewhere, but that we *are* it, we’re what it is today. That’s the way tradition is—at some point you realize you’ve always been part of it, that you’re blessed with this remarkable legacy and community, and you have the chance to carry it forward.”

Michael Alpert

Singer, multi-instrumentalist, dancer, and scholar Michael Alpert has been a key figure in the renaissance of East European Jewish music and culture worldwide since the 1970s. A native Yiddish speaker, he is one of the only Yiddish singers of his generation adept in the style of pre-WWII generations. Alpert is a celebrated innovator in Yiddish song, whose original compositions have expanded the canon. A leading teacher and scholar, his work has helped spark an international revitalization of the Yiddish cultural arts, from Yiddish folksong and dance to klezmer violin. Alpert’s vision has fostered Yiddish/Jewish cultural creativity as both an ethnic heritage and a contemporary identity.

Alpert was born into a Yiddish-speaking family in Los Angeles, California, in 1954. His father had emigrated from Lithuania, while his mother was born in Boston to an immigrant family from Western Ukraine. Raised in a traditional extended family in California and New England, he learned Yiddish, Russian, and Polish songs at an early age, attending Orthodox synagogues and *shule*, secular Yiddish school. He grew up immersed in immigrant music and culture, including the “Yiddish boardwalk scenes” of Venice Beach, West Hollywood, and similar locales on the East Coast.

Moving to New York City in 1979, he was co-founder of the pioneering klezmer band Kapelye, and began intensive documentation of traditional East European-born Yiddish performers, including master singer Bronya Sakina, klezmer violinist Leon Schwartz, singer/drummer Ben Bayzler, clarinetist German Goldenshteyn and Yiddish singer, poet and NEA National Heritage Fellow Beyle Schaechter-Gottesman, all of whom influenced him profoundly.

Alpert is best known for his performances and recordings as a solo artist, with the ensembles Brave Old World and Kapelye, and collaborations with artists across a broad spectrum of cultures and generations, including Theodore Bikel, Daniel Kahn, and Ukrainian-American singer/bandurist Julian Kytasty. He has performed and taught Yiddish music and culture throughout North America and the world, in venues ranging from Polish village streets to a farmworkers’ school in Florida to Carnegie Hall. As musical director of the PBS *Great Performances* special *Itzhak Perlman: In the Fiddler’s House*, he helped bring global attention to Yiddish and klezmer music.

Adept at some 20 languages, Alpert has conducted extensive cultural documentation in Jewish communities throughout the globe. He is an important bridge between older generations and the world klezmer/Yiddish revitalization, and has played a central role in the transmission of Ashkenazic music and dance. Alpert has directed Yiddish cultural programs worldwide, taught at Indiana, Oxford, and Columbia universities, and authored key scholarly publications. He was longtime co-artistic director of Montreal’s *KlezKanada* and consultant to the Jewish Culture Festival in Kraków, Poland, and is currently a Senior Research Fellow at New York City’s Center for Traditional Music and Dance.



Mary Lee Bendolph, Lucy Mingo, and Loretta Pettway

QUILTERS OF GEE'S BEND

Boykin, AL

“I was about 16 when I learned to quilt from my grandmama. I just loved it. That's all I wanted to do, quilt. I feel proud. The Lord lead me and guide me and give me strength to make this quilt with love and peace and happiness so somebody would enjoy it. That makes me feel happy.”

Loretta Pettway

The community of Boykin, Alabama, known to many as Gee's Bend due to its proximity to a bend in the Alabama River, is home to some of the most highly regarded quilters in America. These include Mary Lee Bendolph, Lucy Mingo, and Loretta Pettway, three of the chief quilters from the oldest generation of quilters who represent this profound cultural legacy. Described by the *New York Times* as “some of the most miraculous works of modern art America has produced,” the quilts are known for their improvisational and inventive quality, often being compared to 20th-century abstract paintings.

Mary Lee Bendolph, born in 1935, learned to quilt from her mother. She split her time as a child between working in the fields and attending school. While quilting, Bendolph prefers to use fabric from old clothing to avoid wastefulness, and her style of quilting tends to mix geometric shapes, like rectangles and squares, with abstract designs.

Loretta Pettway, born in 1942, made her first quilt when she was 11 years old with guidance from her grandmother, stepmother, and other female relatives. Pettway tends to use the bricklayer pattern in her quilts, which resembles a pyramid or set of steps. Two quilts by Loretta Pettway and one by Mary Lee Bendolph were in the group chosen for the U.S. Postal Stamp Collection issued in 2006. Today, paintings of these quilts are part of the Quilt Mural Trail, leading visitors around the cultural and natural landscape of Gee's Bend.

A homemaking educator who was born in 1931 and worked for the extension service for more than 20 years, Lucy Mingo has served as a leading quilting instructor, mentoring apprentices and students all over the country. In 2006, Mingo received a Folk Arts Apprenticeship grant from the Alabama State Council on the Arts, to teach quilting to her daughter, Polly Raymond.

The quilting tradition of Gee's Bend dates back to the early 19th century when female slaves used strips of cloth to make bedcovers. Gee's Bend's quilts were first noticed nationally in the 1960s when the women were members of the Freedom Quilting Bee which was organized during the Civil Rights movement to help produce a much-needed income stream into the community. The quilts made by the quilting bee were sold throughout the U.S. In the early 1980s, the staff from the Birmingham Public Library visited the area as part of a photography and oral history project. Mary Lee Bendolph, Lucy Mingo, and Loretta Pettway's quilts have been on exhibit all across the nation, including exhibitions at the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston, the Indianapolis Museum of Art, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and the Whitney Museum of American Art.



Dolly Jacobs

CIRCUS AERIALIST

Sarasota, FL

“The incredible part of it is not just for me. It’s about our visibility. It’s about my father and all the others before me who worked so hard just to make a living and never got this kind of recognition. It’s on their behalf that I accept this award. It’s to honor them.”

Dolly Jacobs

Known as the “Queen of the Air,” Dolly Jacobs is a world-renowned circus aerialist as well as a dedicated teacher, sharing the tradition of circus arts through teaching and performance at her organization, the Circus Arts Conservatory.

Jacobs was born into a family of circus performers. Her mother was a renowned New York model and later performed with the circus. Her father was Lou Jacobs, one of the most recognized clowns of Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus from 1925-87. He had the distinction of being the only living American to have his image on a U.S. postage stamp. In 2002 he was inducted into the Florida Artist Hall of Fame. Jacobs grew up in Sarasota, Florida, and traveled with her father in the circus during her school vacations. She was a part of Sailor Circus in Sarasota, a program uniquely reflective of the community’s circus heritage.

Jacobs joined the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus in 1971 at the age of 13 as a member of the corps de ballet and finished her schooling through homeschooling. She began developing her Roman rings act under the guidance of her godmother, Margie Geiger. She made her solo debut on the rings in 1976, and was lauded for her performances. She was twice asked to perform in the Circus Festival of Monte Carlo and each time was recognized as a “Dame de Cirque.” In 1988 she received the coveted Silver Clown Award presented to her by Prince Albert of Monaco.

Jacobs and her husband, fellow circus artist Pedro Reis, founded Circus Sarasota (today known as the Circus Arts Conservatory) in 1997, a nonprofit organization that both presents professional performances and provides educational training and outreach programs. They now oversee Sailor Circus, the youth circus arts program Jacobs participated in as a youth, and also conduct programming in local schools that integrates the circus arts into science, language arts, and theater classes. Their humor therapy program brings joy and circus arts to those in hospitals, nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and adult care centers.

In 1998, Jacobs was inducted into the prestigious Circus Ring of Fame and in 1999 received the “Circus Celebrity” acclamation from the John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art, given to members of the community who have brought extraordinary dedication and excellence to the circus arts. In 2012, she received the Florida Folk Heritage award from the Florida Department of State. In 2013, she was inducted into The Gallery of Acrobatic Legends for her outstanding acrobatic feats.



Yary Livan

CAMBODIAN CERAMICIST

Lowell, MA

“The best time for me, a good time for me, is time I sit on the (potter) wheel. It’s good meditation when I sit on the wheel. I bring my idea and put it in the clay. I put it to life.”

Yary Livan

A ceramicist and teacher, Yary Livan has a legacy of dedication to his craft and his community. Livan is one of perhaps only three Cambodian master ceramicists to have survived the 1975 Khmer Rouge genocide and the only one known to be living in the U.S., where he shares his artistic knowledge with the next generation through classes and apprenticeships.

Livan began his studies in 1971 at the Royal University of Fine Arts in the capital city of Phnom Penh where he majored in ceramics and painting and focused on traditional Khmer ceramic forms and ornamentation. Khmer ceramics date back to the sixth century and come in a number of forms, including bells, bottles, bowls, figures, storage jars, pots, and urns.

In 1975, the Khmer Rouge regime, led by Pol Pot, took power in Cambodia and began a systematic genocide, primarily targeting artists, writers, and intellectuals and ultimately killing two million Cambodians. Livan survived by using his knowledge of ceramics to build wood-burning kilns needed to manufacture roof tiles. He spent most of the 1980s and 1990s moving from one refugee camp to another, arriving in the U.S. in 2001 and was granted political asylum in 2002.

In 2002, Livan became a Visiting Artist, Ceramics Program, Office for the Arts at Harvard; that year he was the recipient of the Mima Weissmann Award for Study of Ceramic Arts. During his three-year residency at Harvard, Livan was introduced to new technologies, glazes, and as well as a vibrant community of ceramicists.

In 2003, he began teaching at Youth-Art-in-Action, an after-school and summer program for urban youth at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts Boston. Livan taught traditional Cambodian and contemporary sculpture, including modeling, carving, mold making, and casting. He was co-teaching with founder Margaret Rack when the program achieved the 2005 National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award (formally known as Coming Up Taller) from the President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities.

Since 2005, Livan has taught ceramics classes at a number of Lowell schools, and in 2010 he was awarded a Massachusetts Cultural Council Traditional Arts Apprenticeship to teach an architect—Samnang Khoeun—the design, molding, carving, and casting of Cambodian ornaments. In 2012 Livan received a Massachusetts Cultural Council Artist Fellowship, and also became adjunct professor at Middlesex Community College.

In 2012, Livan also partnered with longtime friend and fellow master ceramicist Kang Proeung to build a wood-fired kiln, using space provided by Lowell National Historic Park in a partnership with Middlesex Community College. By building the wood-fired kiln, Livan is able to achieve effects not possible in a gas kiln while also sharing the traditional techniques as part of Middlesex Community College courses and the park’s public programs.



Drink Small

BLUES ARTIST

Columbia, SC

“From a farm house to performing near the White House... singing Hallelujah while I Boogaloo ya! I want everybody to sing along with Drink Small: It is never too late to do right and always too soon to do wrong.”

Drink Small

Known as the ‘Blues Doctor,’ Drink Small is an African-American singer, songwriter, and blues artist. As a musician and teacher, Small has preserved the heritage of his community in South Carolina and has traveled around the county and abroad to share his unique blues styling and his deep bass voice. His style is drawn from the Piedmont blues tradition but also includes gospel, rhythm and blues, boogie-woogie, and Delta and Chicago styles of blues.

Born in 1933 in Bishopville, South Carolina, Small grew up in a family of singers and musicians. He was a musician from a young age, having taught himself guitar and performing at house parties and at church. After high school he played guitar with the gospel group The Spiritualaires, even performing at the legendary Apollo Theater in Harlem. During this time, Small was named best gospel guitarist by *Metronome*.

In 1959, Small began to record and perform the blues, starting with the single “I Love You Alberta” on Sharp Records. He has toured nationally and internationally, performing in a host of historic venues such as the Chicago Blues Fest, the King Biscuit Festival, and the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival, as well as two international world fairs. In addition to performing, he has also taught at music seminars throughout South Carolina.

In 1990, Small received South Carolina’s Jean Laney Harris Folk Heritage Award, the state’s highest award for lifetime achievement in the traditional arts. Small was featured on the cover of *Living Blues*, the renowned magazine on contemporary and legendary blues artists, in 1992. He was inducted into the South Carolina Music & Entertainment Hall of Fame in 1999 and in 2013 received the Bobby “Blue” Bland Ambassador for the Blues award from the Jus’ Blues Foundation. He has received the key to the city of Columbia twice. A book about Drink Small’s life, *Drink Small, the Life & Music of South Carolina’s Blues Doctor* by Gail Wilson-Giaratano, was published in 2014 and funded in part by the South Carolina Arts Commission.

During his long career, Small has given back to both his local community and the larger tradition by mentoring younger performers and sharing his knowledge with students of all ages. Small has released seven albums over the course of his career and continues to perform.



Gertrude Yukie Tsutsumi

Japanese Classical Dancer

Honolulu, HI

“Dance is a form of communication that I enjoy and feel fulfilled doing as a performer and teacher. This creative performing art form has many developmental levels and is a never-ending process, whether perpetuating the traditional or challenging the new. I will continue to strive for meaningfulness, purity, beauty, and enjoyment in dance. This philosophy of the Onoe School of Dance was taught to me by my late and present headmaster teachers in Japan. It is my responsibility to continue to perpetuate and instill this philosophy to my present and future students.”

Gertrude Yukie Tsutsumi

Gertrude Yukie Tsutsumi, also known by her stage name Onoe Kikunobu, is one of the premier *nihon buyo* (Japanese classical dance) artists in Hawaii and has been studying the tradition for more than 50 years. *Nihon buyo* is a dance form that developed in the 17th century with roots in *kabuki* and *noh*, two styles of drama that include elaborate make-up and costumes.

Tsutsumi began training when she was eight years old at the Bando School in Honolulu. In 1956, she traveled to Tokyo to continue her dance education with Onoe Kikunojo I and was granted her *shihan* (master of dance diploma) a year later. She was bestowed the *natori* (professional name) of Onoe Kikunobu, which allowed her to open her own school and bestow professional names as well.

In 1964, Tsutsumi opened the Kikunobu Dance Company in Hawaii to teach a new generation of students Japanese classical dance, and as of 2014, 13 students under her tutelage have been recognized as master dancers. In addition to presenting concerts, Tsutsumi also choreographs new works for the students and holds workshops and demonstrations. She has collaborated with a number of local groups, including the Honolulu Theatre for Youth, the Mānoa Valley Theatre, and Kumu Kahua Theatre, helping support local playwrights in the process.

Since 1980, she has been a lecturer in the University of Hawaii's Department of Theatre and Dance, where she has been the principal dance and movement resource for their productions of Japanese kabuki theater with English translation. Tsutsumi continues to reach students not only in Hawaii, but also on the mainland United States at the request of several of her former students who now teach Japanese dance at universities and colleges throughout the country.

In 2002, Tsutsumi received a Folk & Traditional Arts Apprenticeship grant from the Hawaii State Foundation on Culture and the Arts. Internationally, Tsutsumi received the honor of performing on the stages of well-known theaters in Tokyo such as the Kabuki-za, Shinbashi Embujo, and the National Theater of Japan in dance productions produced by Onoe Kikunojo I and Kikunojo II. In 2004 she received the Silversword Award for Cultural Excellence from the Pan-Pacific Festival. In addition to running her dance company, Tsutsumi worked as an elementary school teacher for 30 years.



Sidonka Wadina

SLOVAK STRAW ARTIST/EGG DECORATOR

Lyons, WI

“I began egg decorating and making straw talismans with my Grandmother as a young girl, then in 1963 while on a trip to visit relatives in Moravia, my cousin Vlasta gave me a Spiral Lantern she had woven. I looked at it and said, ‘Oh Grandma, I wish I could make one like this!’ It was the first intricate plaiting I had seen and was the beginning of a lifelong fascination with straw and a wish come true for me.”

Sidonka Wadina

As a straw artist, egg decorator, and folk painter, Sidonka is an artist deeply influenced by her Slovakian roots having been raised in a Slovak neighborhood in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Her grandmother, Johanna Biksadski, told folk tales and stories of Slovakia while teaching Wadina to decorate eggs and weave straw talismans for the annual Holiday Folk Fair, an ethnic festival the family has participated in since 1943. Biksadski told her: “You are the future, it is up to you to pass this along so it will never be lost.”

An active member in the Slovak community, Wadina was steeped in ancient customs and traditional living and grew up traveling to schools and colleges with Biksadski, who lectured and gave presentations on Slovak culture while Wadina demonstrated. With guidance from her grandmother, Wadina learned a number of egg decorating styles and straw weaving patterns. Relatives visiting Slovakia brought back samples of straw work which she took apart in order to learn their construction. As time went on, Wadina began to study harvest mythology, visit museums in Slovakia, and recreate the straw talismans that had been lost over time—straw being a transient medium with a limited life expectancy.

Wadina is deeply committed to teaching and preserving the legacy that has been passed down to her. She is proficient in dozens of straw plaits and egg decorating techniques from villages all over the Czech Republic and Slovakia. Her dedication to teaching has also taken her to Poland, Hungary, Ukraine, and Belarus, where she conducted master classes in straw weaving to ensure that the transmission of this tradition crosses both generations and borders.

Wadina has participated in the Wisconsin Arts Board’s Folk Arts Apprenticeship Program since the 1990s when she was recognized as a Master Folk Artist. She demonstrated at the Smithsonian Folklife Festival, the Wisconsin Sesquicentennial, and attends many Midwest folklife festivals. Her straw ornaments have decorated the White House Christmas trees for Hillary Clinton, Laura Bush, and three of Wisconsin’s past governors.

She has demonstrated and exhibited her work at the National Czech and Slovak Museum in Cedar Rapids, the Embassy of the Slovak Republic in Washington, DC, and is currently a folk art instructor at the Kenosha Public Museum in Kenosha, Wisconsin.

In 2007, Sidonka graduated summa cum laude from Gateway Technical College with a degree in Graphic Design Technologies and has written and illustrated a Slovak recipes book published by Penfield Press. In 2011, Sidonka was honored for 55 years of volunteering at the Holiday Folk Fair International and in 2014 was inducted into the fair’s Guild of Master Artisans.



Daniel Sheehy

ETHNOMUSICOLOGIST/FOLKLORIST

Falls Church, VA

“I learned so much from Bess. One was kind of a way of being serious, but not too serious, about things and trying to be just a regular person, with no pretension... just like you're another person. That whole attitude was a great equalizer.”

Daniel Sheehy

As this year's Bess Lomax Hawes National Heritage Fellow, Daniel Sheehy is a cultural heritage advocate, dedicated to making the art of diverse artists more recognized and accessible.

A native of Bakersfield, California, and longtime resident of Virginia, Sheehy was recruited by Bess Lomax Hawes in 1974 to do groundbreaking field research among Mexican-American musicians in California for the Smithsonian's Folklife Festival marking our nation's Bicentennial. He later was a Fulbright-Hays scholar in Veracruz, Mexico, earning his PhD in ethnomusicology from the University of California, Los Angeles. He joined the National Endowment for the Arts in 1978, working side-by-side with Lomax Hawes, who became his longtime mentor. He was instrumental in developing and sustaining the infrastructure of the folk and traditional arts field and served as director of folk and traditional arts at the NEA from 1992 to 2000.

In 2000, Sheehy became director and curator of Smithsonian Folkways Recordings, the nonprofit record label of the Smithsonian Institution. Under his leadership, Smithsonian Folkways has published more than 200 recordings, earning five Grammy awards, one Latin Grammy, and 17 nominations. Special initiatives have included the ten-volume *Music of Central Asia*, the *African American Legacy* series co-sponsored by the National Museum of African American History and Culture, and the *Tradiciones/Traditions* series of signature music from Latin America and Latino USA. Sheehy also launched the ten-year *Nuestra Música* project with co-curator Olivia Cadaval, producing six "living exhibitions" of the Smithsonian Folklife Festival. He has also served as acting director of the Smithsonian Latino Center and director of the Smithsonian's Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage.

Sheehy served as co-editor (with Dale Olsen) of the 1,100-page *South America, Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean* volume of the *Garland Encyclopedia of World Music* (1998). His book *Mariachi Music in America: Experiencing Music, Expressing Culture* was published by Oxford University Press in 2006.

In 2006, the Municipio de San Juan, Puerto Rico, dedicated the Second Annual International Crafts Fair to Sheehy in recognition of his longtime support of Puerto Rican crafts-workers. He has served on the boards of the Alliance for California Traditional Arts, the National Council for the Traditional Arts, the American Folklore Society, the Society for Ethnomusicology, and the Association for Cultural Equity. Sheehy was awarded the American Folklore Society's Benjamin A. Botkin prize in 1997 for his major impact on the field of public folklore and the Américo Paredes award in 2010, recognizing a career of excellence in integrating scholarship and engagement with the people and communities one studies. Also a musician, in 1978 he co-founded Mariachi Los Amigos, the Washington, DC area's longest existing mariachi ensemble.



The Bess Lomax Hawes National Heritage Fellowship honors “keepers of tradition” who through their efforts as organizers, educators, producers, cultural advocates, or caretakers of skills and repertoires have had a major beneficial effect on the traditional arts of the United States. A member of the Lomax family of pioneering American folklorists, Bess Lomax Hawes (1921–2009) committed her life to the documentation and presentation of American folk artists. She served as an educator both inside the classroom and beyond, and nurtured the field of public folklore through her service at the National Endowment for the Arts. During her tenure as director of the NEA Folk Arts Program (1977–1993) an infrastructure of state folklorists was put in place, statewide folk arts apprenticeship programs were initiated, and the National Heritage Fellowships were created. In 1993 she received the National Medal of Arts for her many contributions in assisting folk artists nationwide and in bringing folk artistry to the attention of the public.

Acknowledgments

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS

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NEA

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Cover: Mary Lee Bendolph "Strips and Strings" 2003 quilt, photo courtesy of Souls Grown Deep Foundation, Steve Pitkin/Pitkin Studio

Back cover: Loretta Pettway "Blocks and Strips" quilt, photo courtesy of Souls Grown Deep Foundation, Steve Pitkin/Pitkin Studio

Concert Credits

The National Endowment for the Arts would like to express its appreciation to the National Council for the Traditional Arts (NCTA) for its assistance in planning and producing the 2015 National Heritage Fellowships events, which were managed for the NCTA by Associate Director Madeleine Remez. The NCTA is a private nonprofit corporation founded in 1933 and dedicated to the presentation and documentation of folk and traditional arts in the United States.

National Heritage Fellowships Concert

Director

Paul Douglas Michnewicz

Production Manager

Elaine M. Randolph

Set Design

Tony Cisek

Lighting Design

Dan Covey

Sound Design/Production

Stephen Fisher

Charlie Pilzer

Stage Manager

Shari Moxley

Assistant Stage Manager

Martita Lee Slayden

Production Assistants

Becky Reed

Elizabeth Zagraniski

Tré Wheeler

Green Room Coordinator

Adalia Tonneycyk

Logistics

Nicole Martin

Video Projection/Production

Andy Derr, Ken Derr – JakPros

Sign Language Interpreter

Miako Rankin

Lisner Auditorium

Maryann Lombardi

Anne Kogan

Cassandra Lammers

Eric Annis

Radio Production

American Routes, public radio from PRX

Produced and hosted by Nick Spitzer

Associate producer, Garrett Pittman

Recording and remix engineer,

Michael Schweppe

Drivers

Joe Lally

Dean Carrigan

Program Book Design

Fletcher Design, Inc.

Master of Ceremonies

Marco Werman is host and executive editor of the PRI-BBC daily radio news program *The World*. A former Peace Corps volunteer, Werman got his start in radio in the late 1980s while freelancing in Burkina Faso, West Africa, for the BBC World Service. In 1991, he helped start a community station in upstate New York where he was news director, and created and hosted the two-hour morning drive show. He later reported from Rome, Italy, for Monitor Radio. And in 1995, Werman helped create the format for the daily international news program *The World*, where he continues to work. In 1997, he began providing the daily punctuation mark for *The World* in the "Global Hit" segment in which musicians and musical trends around the globe are linked to the news. He took that reporting to *Frontline*, and won an Emmy for his 2006 report "Libya Out of the Shadow."



Meredith Niemman/MGBH

NEA National Heritage Fellowship Awardees

1982–2014

1982

Dewey Balfa *
Cajun Fiddler
Basile, LA

Joe Heaney *
Irish Singer
Brooklyn, NY

Tommy Jarrel *
Appalachian Fiddler
Mt. Airy, NC

Bessie Jones *
Georgia Sea Island Singer
Brunswick, GA

George Lopez *
Santos Woodcarver
Cordova, NM

Brownie Mcghee *
Blues Guitarist/Singer
Oakland, CA

Hugh Mcgraw
Shape Note Singer
Bremen, GA

Lydia Mendoza *
Mexican-American Singer
San Antonio, TX

Bill Monroe *
Bluegrass Musician
Nashville, TN

Elijah Pierce *
Carver/Painter
Columbus, OH

Adam Popovich *
Tamburitza Musician
Dolton, IL

Georgeann Robinson *
Osage Ribbonworker
Bartelsville, OK

Duff Severe *
Saddle Maker
Pendleton, OR

Philip Simmons *
Ornamental Ironwork
Charleston, SC

Sanders "Sonny" Terry *
Blues Harmonica/Singer
Holliswood, NY

1983

Sister Mildred Barker *
Shaker Singer
Poland Spring, ME

* Deceased

Rafael Cepeda *
Bomba Musician/Dancer
Santurce, PR

Ray Hicks *
Appalachian Storyteller
Banner Elk, NC

Stanley Hicks *
Appalachian Musician/
Storyteller/Instrument
Maker
Vilas, NC

John Lee Hooker *
Blues Guitarist/Singer
San Francisco, CA

Mike Manteo *
Sicilian Marionettist
Staten Island, NY

Narciso Martinez *
Texas-Mexican Accordionist/
Composer
San Benito, TX

Lanier Meaders *
Potter
Cleveland, GA

Almeda Riddle *
Ballad Singer
Greers Ferry, AR

Joe Shannon *
Irish Piper
Chicago, IL

Simon St. Pierre
French-American Fiddler
Smyrna Mills, ME

Alex Stewart *
Cooper/Woodworker
Sneedville, TN

Ada Thomas *
Chitimacha Basketmaker
Charenton, LA

Lucinda Toomer *
African-American Quilter
Columbus, GA

Lem Ward *
Decoy Carver/Painter
Crisfield, MD

Dewey Williams *
Shape Note Singer
Ozark, AL

1984

Clifton Chenier *
Creole Zccordionists
Lafayette, LA

Bertha Cook *
Knotted Bedspread Maker
Boone, NC

Joseph Cormier
Cape Breton Violinist
Waltham, MA

Elizabeth Cotton *
African-American Singer/
Songster
Syracuse, NY

Burlon Craig *
Potter
Vale, NC

Albert Fahlbusch *
Hammered Dulcimer
Player/Builder
Scottsbluff, NE

Janie Hunter *
African-American Singer/
Storyteller
Johns Island, SC

Mary Jane Manigault *
African-American Seagrass
Basketmaker
Mt. Pleasant, SC

Genevieve Mougin *
Lebanese-American Lace
Maker
Bettendorf, IA

Martin Mulvihill *
Irish-American Fiddler
Bronx, NY

Howard "Sandman" Sims *
African-American Tap Dancer
New York, NY

Ralph Stanley
Bluegrass Banjo Player/
Appalachian Singer
Coeburn, VA

Margaret Tafoya *
Santa Clara Pueblo Potter
Espanola, NM

Dave Tarras *
Klezmer Clarinetist
Brooklyn, NY

Paul Tiulana *
Eskimo Mask Maker/
Dancer/Singer
Anchorage, Ak

Cleofas Vigil *
Hispanic Storyteller/Singer
San Cristobal, NM

Emily Kau'i Zuttermeister *
Hula Master (Kumu Hula)
Kaneohe, HI

1985

Eppie Archuleta *

Hispanic Weaver
Garden City, ID

Periklis Halkias *

Greek Clarinetist
Astoria Queens, NY

Jimmy Jausoro *

Basque Accordionist
Boise, ID

Mealii Kalama *

Hawaiian Quilter
Honolulu, HI

Lily May Ledford *

Appalachian Musician/Singer
Lexington, KY

Leif Melgaard *

Norwegian Woodcarver
Minneapolis, MN

Bua Xou Mua *

Hmong Musician
Portland, OR

Julio Negrón-Rivera

Puerto Rican Instrument
Maker
Morovis, PR

Alice New Holy Blue Legs

Lakota Sioux Quill Artist
Rapid City, SD

Glenn Ohrlin *

Cowboy Singer/Storyteller/
Illustrator
Mountain Veiw, AR

Henry Townsend *

Blues Musician/Songwriter
St. Louis, MO

Horace "Spoons" Williams *

Percussionist/ Poet
Philadelphia, PA

1986

Alphonse "Bois Sec" Ardoin *

Creole Accordionist
Eunice, LA

Earnest Bennett *

Anglo-American Whittler
Indianapolis, IN

Helen Cordero *

Pueblo Potter
Cochiti, NM

Sonia Domsch

Czech-American Bobbin
Lace Maker
Atwood, KS

Canray Fontenot *

Creole Fiddler
Welsh, LA

John Jackson *

Black Songster/Guitarist
Fairfax Station, VA

Peou Khatna *

Cambodian Court Dancer/
Choreographer
Silver Spring, MD

Valerio Longoria *

Mexican-American
Accordionist
San Antonio, TX

Doc Tate Nevaquaya *

Comanche Indian Flutist
Apache, Ok

Luis Ortega *

Hispanic-American Rawhide
Worker
Paradise, CA

Ola Belle Reed *

Appalachian Banjo Picker/
Singer
Rising Sun, MD

Jenny Thlunaut *

Tlingit Chilkat Blanket Weaver
Haines, AK

Nimrod Workman *

Appalachian Ballad Singer
Macot, & Chattaroy, TN/WV

1987

Juan Alindato *

Carnival Maskmaker
Ponce, PR

Louis Bashell *

Slovenian Accordionist
Greenfield, WI

Genoveva Castellanoz

Mexican-American Corona
Maker
Nyssa, OR

Thomas Edison "Brownie" Ford *

Anglo-Comanche Cowboy
Singer/Storyteller
Herbert, LA

Kansuma Fujima

Japanese-American Dancer
Los Angeles, CA

Claude Joseph Johnson *

African-American Religious
Singer/Orator
Atlanta, GA

Raymond Kane *

Hawaiian Slack Key Guitarist/
Singer
Wai'ane, HI

Wade Mainer

Appalachian Banjo Picker/
Singer
Flint, MI

Sylvester Mcintosh

Crucian Singer/Bandleader
St. Croix, VI

Allison "Tootie" Montana *

Mardi Gras Chief/Costume
Maker
New Orleans, LA

Alex Moore, Sr. *

African-American Blues
Pianist
Dallas, TX

Emilio & Senaida Romero *

Hispanic-American Tin and
Embroidery Workers
Santa Fe, NM

Newton Washburn *

Split Ash Basketmaker
Bethlehem, NH

1988

Pedro Ayala *

Mexican-American
Accordionist
Donna, TX

Kepka Belton

Czech-American Egg Painter
Ellsworth, KS

Amber Densmore *

New England Quilter/
Needleworker
Chelsea, VT

Michael Flatley

Irish-American Stepdancer
Palos Park, IL

Sister Rosalia Haberl *

German-American Bobbin
Lace Maker
Hankinson, ND

John Dee Holeman

African-American Musician/
Dancer/Singer
Durham, NC

Albert "Sunnyland Slim"

Laundrew *
Blues Pianist/Singer
Chicago, IL

Yang Fang Nhu *

Hmong Weaver/Embroiderer
Detroit, MI

NEA NATIONAL HERITAGE FELLOWSHIP AWARDEES

1982–2014

Kenny Sidle
Anglo-American Fiddler
Newark, OH

Willi Mae Ford Smith *
African-American Gospel
Singer
St. Louis, MO

Clyde “Kindy” Sproat *
Hawaiian Cowboy Singer/
Ukulele Player
Kapaae, HI

Arthel “Doc” Watson *
Appalachian Guitarist/Singer
Deep Gap, NC

1989

John Cephas *
Piedmont Blues Guitarist/
Singer
Woodford, VA

Fairfield Four
African-American a Capelle
Gospel Singers
Nashville, TN

José Gutiérrez
Mexican Jarocho Musician/
Singer
Norwalk, CA

Richard Avedis Hagopian
Armenian Oud Player
Visalia, CA

Christy Hengel *
German-American
Concertina Maker
New Ulm, MN

**Vanessa Paukeigope
Jennings**
Kiowa Regalia Maker
Fort Cobb, OK

Ilias Kementzides *
Pontic Greek Lyra Player
and Builder
South Norwalk, CT

Ethel Kvalheim *
Norwegian Rosemaler
Stoughton, WI

Mabel E. Murphy *
Anglo-American Quilter
Fulton, MO

LaVaughn E. Robinson *
African-American Tap Dancer
Philadelphia, PA

Earl Scruggs *
Bluegrass Banjo Player
Nashville, TN

* Deceased

Harry V. Shourds
Wildfowl Decoy Carver
Seaville, NJ

Chesley Goseyun Wilson
Apache Fiddle Maker
Tucson, AZ

1990

Howard Armstrong *
African-American String
Band Musician
Boston, MA

Em Bun
Cambodian Silk Weaver
Harrisburg, PA

Natividad Cano *
Mexican-American Mariachi
Musician
Fillmore, CA

**Giuseppe * and Raffaella
DeFranco**
Southern Italian Musicians
and Dancers
Belleville, NJ

Maude Kegg *
Ojibwe Storyteller/
Craftsperson/Tradition
Bearer
Onamia, MN

Kevin Locke
Lakota Flute Player/Singer/
Dancer/Storyteller
Wakpala, SD

Marie MacDonald
Hawaiian Lei Maker
Kamuela, HI

Wallace McRae
Cowboy Poet
Forsyth, MT

Art Moilanen *
Finnish Accordionist
Mass City, MI

Emilio Rosado *
Woodcarver
Utado, PR

Robert Spicer *
Flatfoot and Buckdancer
Dancer
Dickson, TN

Douglas Wallin *
Appalachian Ballad Singer
Marshall, NC

1991

Etta Baker *
African-American Guitarist
Morgantown, NC

George Blake
Native American Craftsman
(Hupa-Yurok)
Hoopa Valley, CA

Jack Coen *
Irish-American Flautist
Bronx, NY

Rose Frank *
Nez Perce Cornhusk Weaver
Lapwai, ID

Eduardo “Lalo” Guerrero *
Mexican-American Singer/
Guitarist/Composer
Cathedral City, CA

Khamvong Insixiengmai
Southeast Asian Lao Singer
Fresno, CA

Don King *
Western Saddlemaker
Sheridan, WY

Riley “B.B.” King *
African-American Blues
Musician/Singer/
bandleader
Las Vegas, NV

Esther Littlefield *
Alaskan Regalia Maker (Tlingit)
Sitka, AK

Seisho “Harry” Nakasone *
Okinawan-American
Musician
Honolulu, HI

Irvan Perez *
Isleno Singer (Canary Islands)
Poydras, LA

Morgan Sexton *
Appalachian Banjo Player/
Singer
Linefork, KY

Nikitas Tsimouris *
Greek-American Bagpipe
Player
Tarpon Springs, FL

Gussie Wells *
African-American Quilter
Oakland, CA

Arbie Williams *
African-American Quilter
Oakland, CA

Melvin Wine *
Appalachian Fiddler
Copen, WV

1992

Francisco Aguabella *
Afro-Cuban Drummer
Los Angeles, CA

Jerry Brown
Potter (southern stoneware
tradition)
Hamilton, AL

Walker Calhoun
Cherokee Musician/Dancer/
Teacher
Cherokee, NC

Clyde Davenport
Appalachian Fiddler
Jamestown, TN

Belle Deacon *
Athabascan Basketmaker
Greyling, AK

Nora Ezell *
African-American Quilter
Five Points, TN

Gerald Hawpetoss
Menominee/Potowatomie
Regalia Maker
Neopit, WI

Fatima Kuinova
Bukharan Jewish Singer
Rego Park, NY

John Yoshio Naka *
Bonsai Sculptor
Whittier, CA

Marc Savoy
Cajun Accordion Player/
Builder
Eunice, LA

Ng Sheung-Chi
Chinese Toissan Muk'yu Folk
Singer
New York, NY

Othar Turner *
African-American Fife Player
Senatobia, MS

Tanjore Viswanathan *
South Indian Flute Maker
Middletown, CT

1993

Santiago Almeida *
Texas-Mexican Conjunto
Musician
Sunnyside, WA

Kenny Baker *
Bluegrass Fiddler
Cottontown, TN

Inez Catalan *
French Creole Singer
Kaplan, LA

Elena & Nicholas * Charles
Yupik Woodcaver/
Maskmaker/and Skin Sewer
Bethel, AK

Charles Hankins *
Boatbuilder
Lavallette, NJ

Nalani Kanaka'ole & Pualani
Kanaka'ole Kanahele
Hula Masters
Hilo, HI

Everett Kapayou *
Native American Singer
(Meskwaki)
Tama, IA

Mcintosh County Shouters *
African-American Spiritual/
Shout Ensemble
St. Simons Island, GA

Elmer Miller *
Bit and Spur Maker/
Silversmith
Nampa, ID

Jack Owens *
Blues Singer/Guitarist
Bentonla, MS

Mone & Vanxay
Saenphimmachak
Lao Weaver/Needleworker
and Loom Maker
St. Louis, MO

Liang-Xing Tang
Chinese-American Pipa (Lute)
Player
Bayside, NY

1994

Liz Carroll
Irish-American Fiddler
Mundelein, IL

Clarence Fountain & The
Blind Boys of Alabama
African-American Gospel
Singers
Atlanta, GA

Mary Mitchell Gabriel *
Native American
(Passamaquoddy)
Basketmaker
Mesa, AZ

Johnny Gimble *
Western Swing Fiddler
Dripping Springs, TX

Frances Varos Graves *
Hispanic American "Colcha"
Embroidery
Rancho De Taos, NM

Violet Hilbert *
Native American (Skagit)
Storyteller/Conservator
Ca Conner, WA

Sosie Shizuye Matsumoto
Japanese Tea Ceremony
Master
Los Angeles, CA

D.I. Menard
Cajun Musician/Songwriter
Erath, LA

Simon Shaheen
Arab American Oud Player
Brooklyn, NY

Lily Vorperian
Armenian (Marash-Style)
Embroidery
Glendale, CA

Elder Roma Wilson
African-American Harmonica
Player
Oxford, MS

1995

Bao Mo-Li
Chinese-American Jing-Erhu
Player
Flushing, NY

Mary Holiday Black
Navajo Basketmaker
Mexican Hat, UT

Lyman Enloe *
Old-Time Fiddler
Lee's Summit, MO

Donny Golden
Irish-American Step Dancer
Brooklyn, NY

Wayne Henderson
Appalachian Luthier, Musician
Mouth of Wilson, VA

Bea Ellis Hensley
Appalachian Blacksmith
Spruce Pine, NC

Nathan Jackson
Tlingit Alaskan Woodcaver/
Metalsmith/Dancer
Ketchikan, AK

Danongan Kalanduyan
Filipino-American Kulintang
Musician
South San Francisco, CA

NEA National Heritage Fellowship Awardees

1982–2014

Robert Jr. Lockwood *
African-American Delta Blues
Singer/Guitarist
Cleveland, OH

Israel “Cachao” López *
Afro-Cuban Bassist,
Composer, and Bandleader
Miami, FL

Nellie Star Boy Menard *
Lakota Sioux Quiltmaker
Rosebud, SD

Buck Ramsey *
Anglo-American Cowboy
Poet, Singer
Amarillo, TX

1996

Obo Addy *
African (Ghanaian) Master
Drummer/Leader
Portland, OR

Betty Pisio Christenson
Ukrainian-American Pysanky
Suring, WI

Paul Dahlin
Swedish-American Fiddler
Minneapolis, MN

Juan Gutiérrez
Puerto Rican Drummer/
Leader (Bomba and Plena)
New York, NY

Solomon * & Richard Ho’opii
Hawaiian Falsetto Singers/
Musicians
Makawao, HI

Will Keys *
Anglo-American Banjo Player
Gray, TN

Joaquin Lujan *
Chamorro Blacksmith
GMF, GU

Eva McAdams
Shoshone Crafts/Beadwork
Fort Washakie, WY

**John Mealing & Cornelius
Wright, Jr. ***
African-American Work Songs
Birmingham, AL

Vernon Owens
Anglo-American Potter
Seagrove, NC

Dolly Spencer *
Inupiat Dollmaker
Homer, AK

1997

Edward Babb
“Shout” Band Gospel
Trombonist & Band Leader
Jamaica, NY

Charles Brown *
West Coast Blues Pianist &
Composer
Berkeley, CA

Gladys Leblanc Clark
Acadian (Cajun) Spinner &
Weaver
Duson, LA

Georgia Harris *
Catawba Potter
Atlanta, GA

Wen-Yi Hua
Chinese Kunqu Opera Singer
Arcadia, CA

Ali Akbar Khan
North Indian Sarod Player &
Raga Composer
San Anselmo, CA

Ramón José López
Santero & Metalsmith
Santa Fe, NM

Jim* & Jesse Mcreynolds
Bluegrass Musician
Gallatin, TN

Phong Nguyen
Vietnamese Musician/Scholar
Kent, OH

Hystercine Rankin *
African-American Quilter
Lorman, MS

Francis Whitaker *
Blacksmith/Ornamental
Iron Work
Carbondale, CO

1998

Apsara Ensemble
Cambodian Musicians &
Dancers
Fort Washington, MD

Eddie Blazonczyk *
Polish Polka Musician/
Bandleader
Bridgeview, IL

Bruce Caesar
Sac Fox-Pawnee German
Silversmith
Anadarko, OK

Dale Calhoun *
Boatbuilder (Reelfoot Lake
Stumpjumper)
Tiptonville, TN

Antonio De La Rosa *
Tejano Conjunto Accordionist
Riviera, TX

Epstein Brothers
Klezmer Musicians
Sarasota, FL

Sophia George
Yakima Colville Beadwork
and Regalia
Gresham, OR

Nadjeschda Overgaard *
Danish Hardanger
Embroidery
Kimballton, IA

Harilaos Papapostolou *
Byzantine Chant, Greek
Orthodox
Potomac, MD

Roebuck “Pops” Staples *
Gospel/Blues Musician
Dalton, IL

**Claude “The Fiddler”
Williams ***
Jazz Swing Fiddler
Kansas City, MO

1999

Frisner Augustin *
Haitian Drummer
New York, NY

Lila Greengrass Blackdeer
Hocak Black Ash Basketmaker,
Needleworker
Black River Falls, WI

Shirley Caesar
Gospel Singer
Durham, NC

Alfredo Campos
Horeshair Hitcher
Federal Way, WA

**Mary Louise Defender
Wilson**
Dakota Hidatsa Traditionalist
and Storyteller
Shields, ND

Jimmy “Slyde” Godbolt *
African-American Tap Dancer
Hanson, MA

Ulysses “Uly” Goode *
Western Mono Basketmaker
North Fork, CA

* Deceased

Bob Holt *
Ozark Fiddler
Ava, MO

Zakir Hussain
North Indian Master Tabla
Drummer
San Anselmo, CA

Elliott "Ellie" Manette
Trinidadian Steel Pan Builder,
Tuner, Performer
Osage, WV

Mick Moloney
Irish Musician
New York, NY

Eudokia Sorochaniuk *
Ukrainian Weaver, Textile
Artists, Embroidery
Pennsuaken, NJ

Ralph Stanley
Master Boatbuilder,
(Friendship Sloop)
Southwest Harbor, ME

2000

Bounxou Chanthraphone
Lao Weaver, Embroiderer
Brookland Park, MN

Dixie Hummingbirds *
African-American Gospel
Quartet
Philadelphia, PA

Felipe García Villamil
Afro-Cuban Drummer/
Santero
Los Angeles, CA

José González *
Puerto Rican Hammock
Weaver
San Sebastián, PR

Nettie Jackson
Klickitat Basketmaker
White Swan, WA

Santiago Jiménez, Jr
Tex-Mex Accordionist/Singer
San Antonio, TX

Genoa Keawe *
Hawaiian Tto Singer/Ukulele
Player
Honolulu, HI

Frankie Manning *
Lindy Hop Dancer
Choreographer/Innovator
Corona, NY

Joe Willie "Pinetop" Perkins *
Blues Piano Player
La Porte, IN

Konstantinos Pilarinos
Orthodox Byzantine Icon
Woodcarver
Astoria, NY

Chris Strachwitz
(Bess Lomax Hawes Award)
Record Producer/Label
Founder
El Cerrito, CA

B. Dorothy Thompson *
Appalachian Weaver
Davis, WV

Don Walser *
Cowboy & Western Singer/
Guitarist/Composer
Austin, TX

2001

Celestino Avilés *
Santero
Orocovis, PR

Mozell Benson *
African-American Quilter
Opelika, AL

Wilson "Boozoo" Chavis *
Zydeco Accordionist
Lake Charles, LA

Hazel Dickens *
Appalachian Singer
Washington, DC

Evalena Henry
Apache Basketweaver
Peridot, AZ

Peter Kyvelos
Oud Builder
Bedford, MA

**João "João Grande" Olivera
Dos Santos**
Capoeira Angola Master
New York, NY

Eddie Pennington
Thumbpicking Style Guitarist
Princeton, KY

Qi Shu Fang
Peking Opera Performer
Woodhaven, NY

Seiichi Tanaka
Taiko Drummer Dojo
Founder
San Francisco, CA

Dorothy Trumpold
Rug Weaver
High Amana, IA

Fred Tsoodle *
Kiowa Sacred Song Leader
Mountain View, OK

Joseph Wilson *
(Bess Lomax Hawes Award)
Folklorist/Advocate/Presenter
Fries, VA

2002

Ralph Blizzard *
Old-Time Fiddler
Blountville, TN

Loren Bommelyn
Tolowa Singer, Tradition
Bearer, Basketmaker
Crescent City, CA

Kevin Burke
Irish Fiddler
Portland, OR

Francis & Rose Cree *
Ojibwa Basketmakers/
Storytellers
Dunseith, ND

**Luderin Darbone/
Edwin Duhon ***
Cajun Fiddler and
Accordionist
Sulphur/Westlake, LA

Nadim Dlaikan
Lebanese Nye (Reed Flute)
Player
Southgate, MI

David "Honeyboy" Edwards *
Delta Blues Guitarist/Singer
Chicago, IL

Flory Jagoda
Sephardic Musician/
Composer
Alexandria, VA

Samten Losang
Tibetan Sand Mandala Painter
Philadephia, PA

Bob Mcquillen *
Contra Dance Musician
Composer
Peterborough, NH

Clara Neptune Keezer
Passamaquoddy Basketmaker
Perry, ME

Jean Ritchie *
(Bess Lomax Hawes Award)
Appalachian Singer/
Songwriter Dulcimer Player
Port Washington, NY

Domingo "Mingo" Saldivar
Conjunto Accordionist
San Antonio, TX

NEA National Heritage Fellowship Awardees

1982–2014

2003

Basque "Bertsolari" Poets

Jesus Arriada
San Francisco, CA

Johnny Curutchet
South San Francisco, CA

Martin Goicoechea
Rock Springs, WY

Jesus Goni
Reno, NV

Rosa Elene Egipciano
Puerto Rican Bobbin Lace
"Mundillo"
New York, NY

Agnes Oshanee Kenmille *
Salish Beadwork and Tanning
Ronan, MT

Norman Kennedy
Weaver/Ballad Singer
Marshfield, VT

Roberto * & Lorenzo Martinez
Hispanic Guitarist & Violinist
Albuquerque, NM

Norma Miller
African-American Jazz
Dancer, Choreographer
Cape Coral, FL

Carmencristina Moreno
(Bess Lomax Hawes Award)
Mexican-American Singer,
Composer, Teacher
Fresno, CA

Ron Poast
Hardanger Fiddle Luthier
and Player
Black Earth, WI

Felipe I. & Joseph K. Ruak
Carolinian Stick Dance
Leaders
Saipan, MP

Manoochehr Sadeghi
Persian Santour Player
Sherman Oaks, CA

Nicholas Toth
Diving Helmet Builder
Tarpon Springs, FL

2004

Anjani Ambegaokar
Kathak Dancer
Diamond Bar, CA

Charles "Chuck" T. Campbell
Gospel Steel Guitarist
Rochester, NY

* Deceased

Joe Derrane
Irish-American Button
Accordianist
Randolph, MA

Jerry Douglas
Dobro Player
Nashville, TN

Gerald Subiyay Miller *
Skokomish Tradition Bearer
Shelton, WA

Milan Opacich *
Tamburitza Instrument Maker
Schererville, IN

Eliseo & Paula Rodriguez *
Straw Applique Artists
Santa Fe, NM

Koko Taylor *
Blues Musician
Country Club Hills, IL

Yuqin Wang & Zhengli Xu
Chinese Rod Puppeteers
Tigard, OR

Chum Ngek
(Bess Lomax Hawes Award)
Cambodian Musician and
Teacher
Gaithersburg, MD

2005

Herminia Albarrán Romero
Paper-Cutting Artist
San Francisco, CA

Eldrid Skjold Arntzen
Norwegian-American
Rosemaler
Watertown, CT

Earl Barthé *
Decorative Building
Craftsman
New Orleans, LA

Chuck Brown *
African-American Musical
Innovator
Brandywine, MD

Janette Carter *
(Bess Lomax Hawes Award)
Appalachian Musician,
Advocate
Hiltons, VA

Michael Doucet
Cajun Fiddler, Composer, and
Band Leader
Lafayette, LA

Jerry Grcevich
Tamburitza Musician,
Prim Player
North Huntingdon, PA

Grace Henderson Nez *
Navajo Weaver
Ganado, AZ

Wanda Jackson
Early Country, Rockabilly, and
Gospel Singer
Oklahoma City, OK

**Beyle Schaechter-
Gottesman ***
Yiddish Singer, Poet,
Songwriter
Bronx, NY

Albertina Walker *
Gospel Singer
Chicago, IL

James Ka'upena Wong
Hawaiian Chanter
Waianae, HI

2006

Charles M. Carrillo
Santero (Carver and Painter
of Sacred Figures)
Santa Fe, NM

Delores E. Churchill
Haida (Native Alaskan) Weaver
Ketchikan, AK

Henry Gray
Blues Piano Player, Singer
Baton Rouge, LA

Doyle Lawson
Gospel and Bluegrass Singer,
Arranger, and Bandleader
Bristol, TN

Esther Martinez *
Native American Linguist
and Storyteller
San Juan Pueblo, NM

Diomedes Matos
Cuatro (10-String Puerto
Rican Guitar) Maker
Deltona, FL

George Na'ope *
Kumu Hula (Hula Master)
Hilo, HI

Wilho Saari
Finnish Kantele (Lap-Harp)
Player
Naselle, WA

Mavis Staples
Gospel, Rhythm and Blues
Singer
Chicago, IL

Nancy Sweezy *
(Bess Lomax Hawes Award)
Advocate, Scholar, Presenter,
and Preservationist
Lexington, MA

Treme Brass Band
New Orleans Brass Band
New Orleans, LA

2007

Nicholas Benson
Stone Letter Carver and
Calligrapher
Newport, RI

Sidiki Conde
Guinean Dancer and Musician
New York, NY

Violet De Cristoforo *
Haiku Poet And Historian
Salinas, CA

Roland Freeman
(Bess Lomax Hawes Award)
Photo Documentarian,
Author, and Exhibit Curator
Washington, DC

Pat Courtney Gold
Wasco Sally Bag Weaver
Scappoose, Or

Eddie Kamae
Hawaiian Musician,
Composer, Filmmaker
Honolulu, HI

Agustin Lira
Chicano Singer, Musician,
Composer
Fresno, CA

Julia Parker
Kashia Pomo Basketmaker
Midpines, CA

Mary Jane Queen *
Appalachian Musician
Cullowhee, NC

Joe Thompson *
African-American String
Band Musician
Mebane, NC

Irvin L. Trujillo
Rio Grande Weaver
Chimayo, NM

Elaine Hoffman Watts
Klezmer Musician
Havertown, PA

2008

Horace P. Axtell *
Nez Perce Elder, Spiritual
Leader, and Drum Maker
Lewiston, ID

Dale Harwood
Saddlemaker
Shelley, ID

Bettye Kimbrell
Quilter
Mt. Olive, AL

Jeronimo E. Lozano
Retablo Maker
Salt Lake City, UT

Walter Murray Chiesa *
(Bess Lomax Hawes Award)
Traditional Crafts Advocate
Bayamón, PR

**Oneida Hymn Singers
Of Wisconsin**
Hymn Singing
Oneida, WI

Sue Yeon Park
Korean Dancer and Musician
New York, NY

Moges Seyoum
Ethiopian Church Musician
Alexandria, VA

Jelon Vieira
Capoeira Master
New York, NY

Michael G. White
Jazz Clarinetist, Band Leader,
Scholar
New Orleans, LA

Mac Wiseman
Bluegrass and Country Singer
and Musician
Nashville, TN

2009

The Birmingham Sunlights
A Cappella Gospel Group
Birmingham, AL

Edwin Colón Zayas
Cuatro Player
Orocovis, PR

Chitresh Das *
Kathak Dancer and
Choreographer
San Francisco, CA

Leroy Graber *
German-Russian Willow
Basketmaker
Freeman, SD

"Queen" Ida Guillory
Zydeco Musician
Daly City, CA

Dudley Laufman
Dance Caller and Musician
Cantebury, NH

Amma D. Mcken
Yoruba Orisha Singer
Brooklyn, NY

Joel Nelson
Cowboy Poet
Alpine, TX

Teri Rofkar
Tlingit Weaver and
Basketmaker
Sitka, AK

Mike Seeger *
(Bess Lomax Hawes Award)
Musician, Cultural Scholar,
and Advocate
Lexington, VA

Sophiline Cheam Shapiro
Cambodian Classical Dancer
and Choreographer
Long Beach, CA

2010

Yacub Addy *
Ghanaian Drum Master
Latham, NY

**Jim "Texas Shorty"
Chancellor**
Fiddler
Rockwall, TX

Gladys Kukana Grace *
Lauhala (Palm Leaf) Weaver
Honolulu, HI

Mary Jackson
Sweetgrass Basketweaver
Johns Island, SC

Del Mccoury
Bluegrass Guitarist and Singer
Hendersonville, TN

Judith Mcculloh *
(Bess Lomax Hawes Award)
Folklorist and Editor
Urbana, IL

Kamala Lakshmi Narayanan
Bharatanatyam Indian Dancer
Mastic, NY

Mike Rafferty *
Irish Flute Player
Hasbrouck Heights, NJ

Ezequiel Torres
Afro-Cuban Drummer and
Drum Builder
Miami, FL

2011

Laverne Brackens
Quilter
Fairfield, TX

Bo Dollis *
Mardi Gras Indian Chief
New Orleans, LA

NEA NATIONAL HERITAGE FELLOWSHIP AWARDEES

1982–2014

Jim Griffith
(Bess Lomax Hawes Award)
Folklorist
Tuscon, AZ

Roy and Pj Hirabayashi
Taiko Drum Leaders
San Jose, CA

Ledward Kaapana
Slack Key Guitarist
Kaneohe, HI

Frank Newsome
Old Regular Baptist Singer
Haysi, VA

Carlinhos Pandeiro De Ouro
Frame Drum Player and
Percussionist
Los Angeles, CA

Warner Williams
Piedmont Blues Songster
Gaithersburg, MD

Yuri Yunakov
Bulgarian Saxophonist
Bloomfield, NJ

2012

Mike Auldridge *
Dobro Player
Silver Spring, MD

Paul & Darlene Bergren
Dog Sled and Snowshoe
Designers and Builders
Minot, ND

Harold A. Burnham
Master Shipwright
Essex, MA

Albert B. Head
(Bess Lomax Hawes Award)
Traditional Arts Advocate
Montgomery, AL

Leonardo "Flaco" Jimenez
Tejano Accordion Player
San Antonio, TX

Lynne Yoshiko Nakasone
Okinawan Dancer
Honolulu, HI

**Molly Jeannette Neptune
Parker**
Passamaquoddy Basket Maker
Princeton, ME

The Paschall Brothers
Tidewater Gospel Quartet
Chesapeake, VA

Andy Statman
Klezmer Clarinetist,
Mandolinist, and Composer
Brooklyn, NY

2013

Sheila Kay Adams
Ballad Singer, Musician, &
Storyteller
Marshall, NC

Ralph Burns
Storyteller, Pyramid Lake
Paiute Tribe
Nixon, NV

Verónica Castillo
Ceramicist & Clay Sculptor
San Antonio, TX

Séamus Connolly
Irish Fiddler
North Yarmouth, ME

Nicolae Feraru
Cimbalom Player
Chicago, IL

Carol Fran
Swamp Blues Singer & Pianist
Lafayette, LA

Pauline Hillaire
(Bess Lomax Hawes Award)
Tradition Bearer, Lumnmi Tribe
Bellingham, WA

David Ivey
Sacred Harp Hymn Singer
Huntsville, AL

Ramón "Chunky" Sánchez
Chicano Musician & Culture
Bearer
San Diego, CA

2014

Henry Arquette
Mohawk Basketmaker
Hogansburg, NY

Manuel "Cowboy" Donley
Tejano Musician and Singer
Austin, TX

Kevin Doyle
Irish Step Dancer
Barrington, RI

The Holmes Brothers
Sherman Holmes
Wendell Holmes *
Popsy Dixon *
Blues, Gospel, and Rhythm
and Blues Band
Rosedale, MD
Saluda, VA

Yvonne Walker Keshick
Odawa Quillworker
Petoskey, MI

Carolyn Mazloomi
(Bess Lomax Hawes Award)
Quilting Community
Advocate
West Chester, OH

Vera Nakonechny
Ukrainian Embroiderer,
Weaver and Beadworker
Philadelphia, PA

**Singing and Praying Bands
of MD And DE**
African-American Religious
Singers
Maryland and Delaware

Rufus White
Omaha Traditional Singer
and Drum Group Leader
Walthill, NE

* Deceased





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